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March 17, 2004

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Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Re: RM-10822 (Elimination of Rate-of-Return Regulation of Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers, Petition for Rulemaking);
CC Docket No. 96-45 (Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service);
CC Docket No. 01-92 (Developing a Unified Inter-carrier Compensation Regime)
CC Docket No. 97-100 (Petitions for Expedited Declaratory Ruling Preempting Arkansas Telecommunications Regulatory Reform Act of 1997)

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On behalf of Western Wireless Corp. ("Western Wireless"), Mark Rubin, Director of Federal Government Affairs, Western Wireless, and I made separate *ex parte* presentations regarding the proceedings listed above yesterday to the following FCC staff members: (1) Christopher Libertelli, senior legal advisor to Chairman Powell; (2) Matthew Brill, senior legal advisor to Commissioner Abernathy; and (3) William Maher, Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau ("WCB"); Carol Matthey, Deputy Chief, WCB; Tamara Preiss, Chief, Pricing Policy Division ("PPD"), WCB; Steve Morris, Deputy Chief, PPD, WCB; Eric Einhorn, Chief, Telecommunications Access Policy Division ("TAPD"), WCB; and Sharon Webber, Deputy Chief, TAPD, WCB.

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The content of the presentations was consistent with Western Wireless' previous filings in these dockets. We handed out copies of some of those previous filings. We also discussed the relationship between the issues raised in Western Wireless' Petition for Rulemaking to Eliminate Rate-of-Return Regulation and proceedings in the universal service and intercarrier compensation dockets. In addition, we addressed the urgent need for action in the Arkansas preemption proceeding, and the Arkansas statute's blatant inconsistency with the federal Act and with recent FCC and Joint Board pronouncements on the criteria for designating eligible telecommunications carriers.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "David Sieradzki".

David L. Sieradzki
Counsel for Western Wireless Corp.

Enclosures

cc. FCC Staff members listed above